

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for rinsing a splash shield on a mixing machine, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a vessel containing contents to be mixed, the vessel including an opening;

further providing a mixing machine having a holder for receiving the vessel at an access location in the mixing machine, a rotatable mixing element extendable into the vessel for mixing the contents of the vessel, a splash shield positionable over the opening of the vessel, and a nozzle oriented towards the splash shield;

after mixing the contents of the vessel using the mixing element and with the splash shield covering the opening, separating the splash shield and the vessel; and

directing rinsing fluid onto the splash shield using the nozzle while shielding the access location from the rinsing fluid.

2. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, wherein the directing step is performed automatically after the separating step

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein the holder is moveable from the access location in a first direction towards the splash shield and a second direction away from the splash shield to the access location and wherein the separating step includes the step of moving the holder in the second direction.

4. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 3, wherein:

the mixing element is on a shaft;

the splash shield is engageable with a member on the shaft, the splash shield disengageable from the member in response to upward force against the shield, and

mixing is carried out with the splash shield disengaged from the member;

the step of moving the holder in the second direction separates the vessel and splash shield and causes the splash shield to engage with the member on the shaft; and

the method further includes the step of rotating the shaft to rotate the splash shield during the directing step.

5. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, further including the step of rotating the splash shield during the directing step.
6. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, wherein the directing step directs warm water.
7. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, further including the step of directing rinsing fluid onto the mixing element.
8. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, wherein the method includes the steps of:
with the mixing element in the contents of the vessel, causing relative movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions, and
causing the splash shield to retain the vessel within the holder during relative movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions.
9. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 8, wherein in the causing step the mass of the splash shield retains the vessel within the holder.
10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) On a mixing machine for mixing a liquid contained in a vessel having an opening, the mixing machine of a type including ~~a holder for receiving the vessel and a~~ rotatable mixing element extendable into the vessel for mixing the contents of the vessel, the improvement comprising:
a rinse chamber in the mixing machine, the rinse chamber having an entrance and a door moveable to a closed position covering the entrance;
a splash shield carried by the mixing machine, the splash shield positionable covering the opening of the vessel, and
at least one nozzle coupled to a source of rinse fluid and oriented to direct rinse fluid onto the splash shield within the rinse chamber.
11. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 10, wherein the mixing machine is further of the type wherein the mixing element is carried by a shaft, and wherein in the improvement the splash shield is carried by the shaft.
12. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 11, wherein the improvement further includes means for moving the holder in a first direction towards the splash shield to move the vessel into contact

with the splash shield and in a second direction away from the splash shield to separate the vessel from the splash shield.

13. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 12, wherein the splash shield is engageable with a member on the shaft and is disengageable from the member in response to upward force by the vessel against the splash shield.

14. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 13, wherein the shaft is rotatable to rotate the splash shield as rinse fluid is directed onto the splash shield by the nozzle.

15. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 10, wherein the at least one nozzle is oriented to direct rinse fluid onto the mixing element.

16. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 12, wherein the splash shield is of sufficient mass to remain in position covering the opening of the vessel during movement of the holder in the second direction until it engages with the member.

17. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 10, wherein the splash shield is of sufficient mass to retain the vessel within the holder during relative movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions.

Claims 18 – 20 are canceled.

21. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 1, wherein the directing step directs a rinse solution comprising sanitizing solution.

22. (ORIGINAL) The method of claim 21, wherein the sanitizing solution includes a quaternary ammonium sanitizer solution.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) On a mixing machine of a type having a rotatable mixing element extendable into a vessel for mixing the contents of the vessel, the improvement comprising:
a splash shield carried by the mixing machine, the splash shield positionable to shield the opening of the vessel,
a source of rinse fluid; [[and]]

at least one nozzle coupled to the source of rinse fluid and oriented to direct rinse fluid onto the splash shield; and

an access location in the mixing machine, the vessel positionable at the access location in preparation for mixing of the vessel contents and retrievable from the access location following mixing; and

a barrier moveably positioned to shield the access location from rinse fluid.

24. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 23, wherein the source of rinse fluid comprises sanitizing solution.

25. (ORIGINAL) The improvement of claim 24, wherein the sanitizing solution includes a quaternary ammonium sanitizer solution.

26. (NEW) The method of claim 1 wherein:
the mixing machine further includes a rinse chamber having an entrance and a door,
during the rinsing step the splash shield is positioned within the rinse chamber; and
wherein the shielding step includes moving the door to a closed position to enclose the splash shield within the rinse chamber.

27. (NEW) The method of claim 26 wherein the door defines a flow path and wherein the method includes causing rinse water falling from the splash shield to flow along the flow path to a drain..

28. (NEW) The method of claim 26 wherein the separating step includes the step of moving the holder in a first direction to move the opening of the vessel from a first position within the rinse chamber to a second position at the access location.

29. (NEW) The improvement of claim 10, wherein:
the improvement further includes a holder proportioned to receive the vessel and moveable in a first direction to carry at least the opening of the vessel through the entrance into the rinse chamber and into contact with the splash shield, and moveable in a second direction to separate the opening of the vessel from the splash shield.